New Leadership for Arlington Thrive

Spring ushered in big changes for Arlington Thrive as Andrew Schneider became the Executive Director and Shandra Niswander was promoted to Director of Development.

Most recently director of the College of William & Mary’s Washington Area Alumni Business Alliance, Schneider has wide experience in strategic planning, marketing, fundraising, and public policy, and a rich record of involvement in the Arlington Community. A 2011 graduate of Leadership Arlington, Schneider received their “40 Under 40” leadership award in 2014. He holds an MBA from the University of Maryland and a BA from the College of William & Mary.

“Andrew brings to Arlington Thrive great energy and a deep commitment to the wellbeing of all Arlington residents.”

Candy Fowler
President of the Arlington Thrive Board of Directors

Shandra Niswander joined the Arlington Thrive staff in 2013 as the Development Manager. Shandra coordinates Arlington Thrive’s Resolve to Run program and also participates in the running program. She completed her doctoral coursework in Sociology at Loyola University Chicago with a Graduate Certificate in Philanthropy and the Nonprofit Sector.

Resolve to Run:
The Fun and Fundraising Continued in 2016

A record-breaking number of Arlington Thrive Resolve to Run participants crossed the finish line of the George Washington Parkway Classic 10 mile and 5K races on Sunday, April 24. Out of 47 runners in the program, 40 ran the race this year.

Thank you, Thrive Volunteers and Arlington County DHS

Arlington Thrive would not be able to do its work in the community without our volunteers. On April 29, the Arlington County Department of Human Services (DHS) hosted a volunteer appreciation breakfast, which also served as a welcome event for new Executive Director Andrew Schneider.

If you’re interested in becoming a Thrive volunteer, email info@arlingtonthrive.org or call 703-558-0035.
From the Executive Director

Just over three months ago, I was appointed Executive Director of Arlington Thrive. Since then, I have worked to gain a deeper understanding of Arlington Thrive, our role in the community, and the dedication of so many people who make our work possible. I’ve gotten to know my colleagues, Shandra Niswander, Nicole LaFragola, and Nory Flores, our dedicated volunteers, and our partners, including our largest partner, the Arlington County Department of Human Services. It truly is a team effort that allows Arlington Thrive to serve our neighbors.

I am humbled and impressed by the impact Arlington Thrive makes on the lives of so many people. Each day, our emergency assistance prevents families in crisis from slipping into homelessness, unemployment or medical catastrophes. And each day, we strive toward our vision: An Arlington community where all have homes, are financially stable, and thrive. We live in a land of plenty, yet there are thousands of Arlingtonians who struggle with the high cost of living, rising rents, medical costs and utilities. Arlington Thrive’s funds help many to live and thrive in the place we all call home. But there is still great need. On most days, the $1400 allocated by our Daily Fund volunteers is spent in under one hour.

We continue to need your support. Please help us spread the word about Arlington Thrive by inviting me to meet with your civic association, faith group or social circle. Consider making an extra donation, or becoming a volunteer. We value your input and ideas. Give me a call or send me an email. Working together, we will make a difference in our community. I look forward to seeing you soon.

Andrew

Board Transitions

This spring, Arlington Thrive welcomed two new members of the Board of Directors.

Betsy Howes-Bean brings expertise in the areas of finance, accounting and management of people. She also has served on the Board of Trustees for First Presbyterian Church and was a PTA officer at Key Elementary and Gunston Middle Schools. Betsy holds a B.A. in Economics from Wellesley College and a Master of Public Policy from Harvard Kennedy School.

Sandy Winger, a former Arlington Thrive client, was featured in the 40th Anniversary video. A volunteer for Arlington Thrive and Meals on Wheels, Sandy also has served on the Board of St. Paul’s Episcopal Church and the Arlington County Fair.

In March, we said goodbye to Renee Underwood, who served on the Board since 2013. Renee was a member of Arlington Thrive’s Development and Communications Committee and the Program Committee. She will continue to serve on the Program Committee. Thank you, Renee, for your many contributions to Thrive’s mission.
Arlington Thrive: A Lifeline at the Right Time

Denise Hlavaty moved to Arlington after working at the same social services job for over nine years in Minnesota. Grieving for her boyfriend, a US Army soldier who was killed in Iraq, she initially intended to take a “break” for a year or so. She chose to come to the Washington area because her boyfriend was buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

About a year later, Denise was ready to find a new job, but an unexpected health issue changed that plan. Just 40 years old, she detected a lump in her breast. She went in for her very first mammogram and was diagnosed with Stage II breast cancer.

“At the time, I had no local friends, no job, no family in the area, sketchy month-to-month private insurance, and not much savings left.”

– Denise

Because this happened before the Affordable Health Care Act took effect, Denise’s insurance company would no longer cover her. Fortunately, her physicians and Virginia Hospital Center were willing to write off her extensive medical bills, which eventually included two surgeries, four rounds of chemo, and 33 daily radiation sessions.

Even after she had eliminated any extra expenses from her budget, including cable, telephone, and internet access, she struggled just to pay her rent and purchase food that would aid in her recovery.

Two months after completing her cancer treatment, and after applying for countless jobs during that time, Denise finally found a job. Unfortunately, because she would not get paid for several weeks after her start date, she didn’t have enough money to pay her rent. Then the Virginia Hospital Center directed her to Arlington Department of Human Services (DHS) and Arlington Thrive. With only $150 left in her bank account, Denise was able to get $1000 of her month’s rent paid by DHS, and the remainder (approximately $400) was paid by Arlington Thrive.

“I have gone to school or worked, other than a few brief periods, my entire adult life. If you had told me there would ever be a point where I would need public assistance, I would not have believed you. I was not the kind of person who would ever need it. Until I was. It was the most terrifying, helpless, humbling experience I have ever gone through,” said Denise. “People wouldn’t necessarily believe me when I said it, but running out of money was much more stressful than having cancer ever was. My doctors would ask me to discuss my stress levels and stressors, and I would tell them that cancer was not even cracking the top five anymore.”

Today, Denise is a Program Manager at the Department of Defense and is able to pay her bills on her own. She credits Arlington Thrive with helping her get back on her feet again. Because she believes so strongly in our mission, and welcomes the opportunity to share her story with our donors, Denise has chosen to let us use her real name. She looks forward to meeting you at future Arlington Thrive events.

By supporting Arlington Thrive, you help individuals like Denise. Thank you!

The Arlington Thrive Board of Directors

Bottom row, (left to right): Jane Northern, Brenna Hill, Rebecca Ely, Hanna Eun, Sheena McConnell. Top row, (left to right): Kellen MacBeth, Cynthia Dahlin, Candy Fowler, Sandy Winger, Toby Haggerty, Allen O’Neil, Betsy Howes-Bean
Resolve to Run: The Fun and Fundraising Continued in 2016 ... continued

Arlington Thrive’s 10-mile team placed 27th out of 57 teams running the 10 mile race. Michelle Maynard’s time of 1:25:54 earned her 10th place among 215 women in her age group (50-54). She placed 1, 248th overall out of 5,339 runners.

Returning Resolve to Run 10-miler John Underwood placed 4th out of 18 in his age group (males 70-74) and was 1,444th out of 5,339 overall. In the 5K race, Thrive’s Holden Anderson finished 8th in his age group (males 15-19) with a time of 25:29. He placed 110th out of a total of 1,467 5K runners.

While finishing the race is an important goal, raising funds for Arlington Thrive is the main objective. This year, members of the Resolve to Run team surpassed their fundraising goal of $16,000 and raised $16,425, which will support Thrive’s Daily Fund. The top five fundraisers were Jill Barker, Toby Haggerty, Team Judie, John Underwood and Sheila Smith.

Spotlight on Team Judie

For one group of walkers, the 5K race was an opportunity to celebrate the life of a friend, Judie Armington, who sadly lost her battle with cancer in the summer of 2015. Judie, a member of the First Presbyterian Church, trained with the Resolve to Run program last year and walked the 5K race. The photo below shows her victoriously crossing the finish line! This year, several of her First Presbyterian Church friends formed “Team Judie” and walked the 5K in her memory.

Arlington Thrive named Goodwin House Foundation Partner

As of January 1, 2016, Arlington Thrive is pleased to be listed as a Goodwin House Foundation Community Matching Gift Program Partner. The Goodwin House Foundation’s Community Matching Gift Program (CMGP) matches charitable gifts made by residents of Goodwin House Alexandria and Goodwin House Bailey’s Crossroads to select nonprofit organizations in Northern Virginia, which have specific programs addressing the needs of older adults.

The Foundation matches gifts made by residents to Goodwin House Partners on a 1:1 basis. Matches are made between January 1 and December 31 of each year. Currently, the Foundation will match gifts up to $500 per donor, per organization, per calendar year. The maximum matching amount is $5,000 per organization per year. Residents make their contributions directly to the partnering organizations. At the end of each calendar quarter, partnering organizations send the Foundation a list of eligible gifts to be matched. Arlington Thrive is proud to join the list of Community Matching Gift Program Partners, which includes Arlington Free Clinic, Carpenter’s Shelter and Culpepper Garden among others.
Thank you to all who supported the Arlington Thrive 40th Anniversary Celebration & Fundraiser on November 18, 2015 and helped us raise much-needed funds for our neighbors in need. Over 140 guests attended, and we raised over $140,000, exceeding our fundraising goal. We are especially grateful for our event sponsors:

**Champions**
Candace Fowler & Bob Brookhiser

**Benefactors**
Cynthia Dahlin & Ron Barusch

**Sustainers**
Arlington Community Foundation
Dominion
Koons Toyota Arlington

Anonymous, Ginger Geoffrey & John Andelin, Jill Barker & Michael Crosswell, Gerri & Glenn Ferguson, Sheena McConnell & Scott Newlon, Daphne Papamichael & Tim Nichols, Kathleen Gilles Seidel, Edie & Tom Smolinski, Renee & John Underwood

**Supporters**
Arlington Dentistry by Design
Courthouse Art of Dentistry
Cardinal Bank
EagleBank
Marymount University

Rosalie & Edwin Demoney, Helene & Liam Ebrill, Pearl & Art Hicks, Ralph W. Johnson, Ann C. Rudd, Kimbra Kenney & Trueman Sharp, Pat & Steve Telkins, Terry & Bob Zawacki

**Good Neighbors**

Former Executive Director Gerry Shannon and Board President Candy Fowler accepted a 40th Anniversary commendation from County Board members Walter Tejada and Mary Hynes on behalf of Arlington Thrive.
Save the Date!

**Arlington Turkey Trot • November 24, 2016**

Arlington Thrive will be a beneficiary of the 2016 Arlington Turkey Trot. Founded by Christ Church of Arlington, Arlington Turkey Trot provides an opportunity for people of all ages to enjoy a fun, healthy 5K run/walk, while raising support and greater awareness for local Arlington County human services organizations. Arlington Thrive joins four current beneficiaries of the race designated by Christ Church of Arlington: Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC), Arlington Street People’s Assistance Network (A-SPAN), Bridges to Independence (formerly Arlington-Alexandria Coalition for the Homeless), and Doorways for Women and Families.

How can you help? Register to run the race on Thanksgiving Day 2016! Sign up to be a volunteer! Or consider an individual or corporate sponsorship. Look for more details on Arlington Thrive’s website, Facebook page and upcoming e-news.

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**Dominion Guild Open House • October 26, 2016**

This fall marks the 30th Annual Dominion Guild Open House Boutiques and Coffee fundraiser. Established in 1986, the Guild was founded by a group of women from Northern Virginia to raise funds for local charities. The organization has distributed over $800,000, as a result of these efforts. Arlington Thrive is pleased to be a beneficiary of the annual event this year, which donates its proceeds to nonprofit organizations serving the Northern Virginia community. The Dominion Guild is delighted to hold this year’s Open House on October 26th, at the elegant home of Juliana Yaskin, 4134 40th Street, North, in Arlington. A Preview Party for members, guests and donors will be held on Tuesday, October 25th. Watch our website, Facebook page and e-news in early fall for details on how to purchase a ticket.